



**Louisville Metro Tree Advisory Commission**  
**Tuesday, August 26, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.**  
**Air Pollution Control District Boardroom**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**I. Welcome and Announcements – Katy Schneider, Co-Chair**

The following Louisville Metro Tree Advisory Commission (hereinafter, “Commission” or “LMTAC”) members were present: Henry Heuser (Co-Chair), Katy Schneider (Co-Chair), Allen Steinbock (Secretary/Treasurer), Maria Koetter, Claude Stephens, Amy Johnson, Betsy Ruhe, Cheri Bryant Hamilton, Todd Eberle, Robert Eberenz, Jr., Nelson Maynard, and Aaron Boggs, as well as ex-officio Commissioners Mark White, Mesude Duyar and Michelle King.

Co-Chair Katy Schneider, Jr. brought the meeting to order at 5:04pm.

**II. Approval of Minutes – Henry Heuser, Co-Chair**

Co-Chair Henry Heuser asked for and received unanimous approval of the minutes from last meeting. Commissioner Nelson Maynard made the motion to approve and Commissioner Claude Stephens seconded.

**III. Old Business**

**a. Update from Office of Sustainability – Maria Koetter, Director of Sustainability**

Maria Koetter, Commissioner (Office of Sustainability), reported that the Office of Sustainability is working to implement a green infrastructure incentive program that aligns with MSD’s program. The Office of Sustainability is also integrating tree planting into the Green Living Certification Program, which will encourage individuals and households to live more sustainably. The program had been developed through a partnership between Brightside and the Office of Sustainability. The SoBro Artwalks event included a tree donation. SoBro is part of the Office of Sustainability’s EcoDistricts program.

**b. Update from Urban Forestry Coordinator – Erin Thompson**

Erin Thompson, Urban Forestry Coordinator, reported that she has been working on education materials such as tree planting instructions that can be used at tabling events and with the Louisville Sustainability Council’s Tree Action Group. Erin has also been working on getting that

information on the Brightside website. She's also working on a community-wide planting on November 8<sup>th</sup>. During that event, 50 – 60 trees will be planted at Chickasaw Park using funding obtained by Brightside. Erin received the land cover analysis from the Urban Tree Canopy Assessment. She's reviewing it to make sure it's accurate. Erin expects we'll achieve 92% accuracy. The timeline is to have the results by October 31<sup>st</sup>. Erin expects the Mayor will be able to make an announcement before the end of the year.

Henry asked how much planning she is doing for the upcoming planting season. Erin said she's passed on information to the folks in the Highlands, but not many other groups have contacted her. We may be able to mention those groups in the September press conference.

### **c. Nature Conservancy Update - Cadell Walker**

Cadell was not present to give a report. Katy will follow up with her.

## **IV. New Business**

### **a. Emerald Ash Borer Work – LG&E Arborist Team**

Terry Wright, from the LG&E Arborist Team, gave a presentation (see Attachment A) on the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) in Kentucky. EAB is a beetle native to China, Korea, Japan and east Russia. The adult lays eggs on the bark. It emerges as an adult. It was first found in Michigan in 2002. All ash trees in North America are susceptible. Symptoms include a thinning tree canopy on affected trees and D-shaped exit holes in the bark. EAB can travel ½ to 2 miles per year. In 2014, Kentucky fell under the Federal Quarantine Act. Total infestation is expected in Kentucky by 2022. EAB is expected to be the most destructive non-native insect in the history of the U.S. to date. It has infested 23 states and Canada. The removal of the trees is not the end of the economic impact. Once the tree dies, they decay relatively quickly. Wind storms knock them down, often on top of power lines, taking out power. In addition, stormwater uptake and shade decrease.

Katy asked how long LG&E has been focused on this as a utility company. Terry said they have been working on EAB since 2012.

In Louisville, EAB is all over Jefferson County, but it's most concentrated east of I-65 and the I-64 corridor. Ash trees make up an estimated 266 million trees in Kentucky. Ash trees make up 17% of the tree population in Louisville.

LG&E cannot remove trees without permission from landowners. LG&E has removed 2700 trees within the past year. LG&E has appropriated \$2.1 million in 2015 for battling EAB.

An audience member asked if there is an effective treatment before EAB gets too far advanced. Terry said the trees have to be treated at the right time, otherwise treatment is useless. Mesude Duyar, Ex-officio Commissioner (Metro Parks) said she is using treatment methods. They have treated 5% of their inventoried ash trees in the park system over the past four years. She says it seems to be helping.

Katy asked if LG&E has inventoried all ash trees near power lines. Terry said they are trying to inventory them. They are not waiting for the homeowner to take the initiative. Audience member asked if LG&E could help a neighborhood association remove ash trees. Terry said yes.

Mesude said they have treated ash trees all over the park system. She said she has a map showing where the treated trees are located. An audience member mentioned that the Waterfront Development Corporation has treated all of its ash trees.

Todd asked what happens if LG&E asks a homeowner for permission to cut down a tree and they say no. Terry said they explain the situation and will come back at a later date to ask again.

Henry asked if nurseries are still selling ash trees in Jefferson County. Terry said yes.

An audience member asked if EAB ever attacks other trees, or just ash. Terry said just ash.

An audience member asked if LG&E notes only trees they want to remove or all ash trees in their inventories. Terry said they mark all ash trees. Nelson asked if they are only marking ash trees that will affect the electric facilities. Terry said yes.

Henry asked if LG&E can put something in a newsletter to try to convince people not to buy ash trees at nurseries. Nelson said there has been a lot of information in the public already.

An audience member asked how high up they attack the tree. Mesude said the most effective treatment method is the trunk injection. The insect starts at the top of the trunk and moves down, but the injection starts at the base of the tree.

## **b. LG&E Funding**

Katy announced that Nelson helped to obtain funding from LG&E for the tree assessment. Katy expressed her gratitude on behalf of the Commission. Commissioner Aaron Boggs echoed Katy's sentiments, thanking LG&E for their help at UofL. Mesude also thanked LG&E for their assistance.

# **V. Committee Reports**

## **a. Policy Committee**

Katy said the Planning Commission met August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The meeting lasted four or five hours and did not get to the tree portion. They plan to cover it at the September 4<sup>th</sup> meeting at 1pm at the Old Jail at the corner of Liberty and Jefferson. Katy urged Commission and audience members to attend.

Henry asked that an email be sent out to the Commission as a reminder.

Jim Mims said they are concluding a two year process of updating the Land Development Code (LDC) and the tree canopy section is a big piece. The staff has re-scripted big portions of the LDC, and it is in the process of going to the Planning Commission. Next, it will go to Metro Council for their adoption, at which point the city implements and enforces the code.

Commissioner Todd Eberle gave an update on the ordinance process. The LDC deals largely with private development. The ordinance would deal with public trees. The committee has concluded their work on one section of the ordinance. Todd can send that out electronically to anyone that wants it. They are meeting again on September 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4:30pm in the APCD Board Room. They have started on the public tree regulations and standards, which would include a permitted and prohibited tree species listing aimed at solving the planting of ash trees in public areas. They will consider a possible ordinance that prevents the planting of a tree that could spread a disease to another tree – the ordinance would require the person to take down the tree. This will include street trees, park trees, or trees on other public property. The list of trees would be created by the Urban Forester. The listing would also include trees that are marked for active elimination. They will recommend that no trees be planted in public areas except those on the list.

Katy emphasized that this is a draft. A Louisville tree ordinance was considered in 1991, but the process takes a while. Todd said the goal of the committee is to draft something the Commission can review and recommend to Metro Council.

## **b. Education Committee**

Claude reported that the education campaign efforts are moving forward. They decided to step back from the campaign paraphernalia to let the Tree Action Committee from the Louisville Sustainability Council align all of the tree groups in Louisville. Erin is now working with those groups. This campaign probably will not move forward as quickly as we previously had thought.

Katy mentioned that the LMTAC needs people to appear at hearings around town. Katie suggested mobilizing an army of non-commission members. These people could go and speak on the importance of planting trees with new developments. Brightside is not able to do this; the LMTAC needs independent citizens. There is a meeting tonight about a development across from Trader Joe's on Shelbyville Road. They are planning to put down blacktop with limited or no trees. The meeting is at the Saint Matthews Community Center tonight at 6 or 7pm.

## **VI. Projects Committee**

Erin reported that they have a meeting on September 10<sup>th</sup>. They are working on the parameters that should be included in the recommended tree species list.

## **VII. Community Projects Updates**

Henry said he met with Vanessa Burns (Director of Public Works) to get Public Works to continue widening the tree holes downtown. Audience member spoke about a committee working to get trees on the Bardstown, Baxter Avenue corridor. A few years ago, they walked with someone from Public Works and Tom Owen to identify spots for trees and nothing happened. They are working with Vanessa Burns to start the project again.

The Douglas neighborhood is also working on a plan, said Josh White from the Highland Douglass Neighborhood Association.

Commissioner Besty Ruhe reported that she needs help selecting tree species based on height. She also said the Beechmont neighborhood had a wooden fence that served as a sound barrier that was torn down, including many oak trees. There is no requirement that they let the neighborhood know in advance that they are planning to remove trees. The fence is located on Southern Parkway on the south side. Churchill Downs does not have money to address the landscaping issue. The neighborhood association is contributing some funds to replant the trees.

An audience member said some people will cut down trees on a public right away. Steve Kempt from the Highway Association said there are some grounds for prosecuting these people. Mark White, Ex-officio Commissioner (City Arborist), said they give citations to anyone cutting down a tree in the right of way.

Henry asked Steve about the vines strangling trees near Seneca Park. Steve said the project is moving forward thanks to Brightside. Henry emphasized that it's urgent. Gina O'Brien (Executive Director of Brightside) said the project completion timeline is one year.

Commissioner Cheri Bryant-Hamilton asked Mark for an update on the West Market Street Corridor. Mark said the soil has been replaced with the correct soil. They are planting 30 – 35, 2 – 2.5 inch trees. The tree planting is a little early for the season, but construction was happening so the timing was right. They have a one-year maintenance contract on everything planted.

Mesude said they are planting along Shawnee Drive during the upcoming planting season.

Audience member announced that we have lost trees downtown on Muhammad Ali, close to the entrance ramp to I-65.

Henry announced that on September 21<sup>st</sup>, Patrick Piuma wants to highlight trees and tree fundraising at the Beer Garden at Resurfaced. Henry suggested getting Patrick at the next meeting to talk about this.

## **VIII. Adjourn**

The next meeting is September 23, 2014, at 5:00pm in the Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District Boardroom.

Henry adjourned the meeting at 6:13pm.

[Attachment B was not discussed at the meeting, but was provided by Secretary/Treasurer Allen Steinbock as an update on the balance of funds in The Louisville Tree Fund. The balance as of 7/31/2014 was \$11,531.00.]